

FLORIDA SLIDING GLASS DOORS AND WINDOWS

The sliding glass doors that are manufactured in Florida are of a unique design when compared to sliding doors produced up in the colder climates. The frame of this door utilizes a "Weep System" to deal with the large amounts of water produced during the heavy rainstorms that Florida is known for. This design incorporates a sill (Track) which is intended to be installed into a recess formed in the house pad, below the level of the finished floor. The bottom of this recess is also the top of the step that leads down to the exterior surface below. The height of this step should be at least 1 ½" above the ground surface. It is this step, combined with the recess in the house pad, that is designed to prevent pooling rain water from reaching the level of your interior floor.

On the back of the sill, (Toward the interior) is the raised part of the track that is in place to keep water to the exterior side of it. When water hits these doors, it is meant to flow freely within the track system, and exit via the notches located at each end of the track, then over the step, and down to the ground surface below. During a rain storm, you may be able to see water in the track, even when the doors are closed. Although this might give the impression that there is water intrusion, there is not, as the water remains to the exterior side of the sill riser. When this condition exists, it is only temporary, and does not compromise the integrity of the opening which it is protecting. After the rain has subsided, any water remaining in the track will either flow out through the ends of the track, or eventually evaporate.

The horizontal sliding windows are of a similar design, but the weep system includes a collection tank, which is located beneath the track. This chamber collects water from the track above, and routes water out through the weep holes at the bottom of the window. These weep holes have covers placed over them, and there is a hinged flap in the cover that will let water out and prevent the wind from coming in. It is important that these weep hole covers are not blocked by caulk, paint or stucco, etc. so that they operate freely. As it is with the sliding doors, you may see some water within the window sill, but it will dissipate in the same manner mentioned above.

The Lawson windows and sliding glass doors have been tested by an independent testing lab for structural wind loads and water infiltration. The results of this testing show that they meet or exceed all of the requirements of the Dade County Product Control System, which has the most stringent performance requirements in the country. The approval documentation can be viewed by logging onto the Miami-Dade website at http://www.miamidade.gov/buildingcode/pc-search_app.asp, Select "Applicant", then scroll down to, and click on, Lawson Industries, then click on the "Go" button. Here, you will find a list of all of our approved products.

Please note that in order for the weep systems to continue to perform properly, it is imperative that the tracks are kept free of dirt and debris to allow the water to flow freely to the outside. There should also be a yearly inspection and maintenance program in place, to ensure that all joints and screw heads in the door tracks are kept properly sealed with caulk or seam sealer.

Thank you,
Lawson Industries